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FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3423
INFO RUEHB/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 2188
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY 8402
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 0056
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY 7892
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 2301
RHMMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY
RHMFISS/COMUSKOREA J2 SEOUL KOR PRIORITY
RHMFISS/COMUSKOREA J3 SEOUL KOR PRIORITY
RHMFISS/COMUSKOREA J5 SEOUL KOR PRIORITY
RHMFISS/COMUSKOREA SCJS SEOUL KOR PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC//OSD/ISA/EAP// PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 000793

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/05/2017

TAGS: PARM PREL MOPS MARR PBTS KS

SUBJECT: ROK INQUIRIES ON PRT LEADERSHIP IN AFGHANISTAN

Classified By: POL M/C Joseph Y. Yun. Reasons 1.4 (b,d).

¶1. (U) This is an action request. See para 2.

¶2. (C) In a March 16 meeting with Director General for North American Affairs Bureau of Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade Cho Byung-jae, POL M/C raised the issue of ROKG plans to lead a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Afghanistan. Cho acknowledged FM Song's positive note on "exploring possibilities for ROK contributions" during Song's March 2 meeting with Secretary Gates and requested additional information on the following items:

-- Location: If the ROKG were to lead a PRT, where would the ROK-led PRT be located?

-- Security: Would the U.S. and/or NATO be able to provide security forces for the ROK-led PRT?

-- Funding: What funds are available for non-U.S.-led PRTs?

¶3. (SBU) Cho acknowledged that the PRT leadership discussion is in its initial stage and that the lead ROKG office has therefore not yet been designated. Cho commented that the ROKG contribution to Afghanistan beyond December 2007 would probably involve non-military assistance only, since troop deployment would require National Assembly approval. Currently, all ROK troops in Afghanistan are scheduled to return to Korea by December 2007. DG Cho noted that answers to the above questions would aid the ROKG's internal decision.

¶4. (SBU) POL M/C underscored the importance of renewed efforts to consolidate and strengthen ROK assistance in Afghanistan and encouraged MOFAT to support the idea of South Korea leading a PRT.

VERSHBOW